



**MY  
BROTHER'S  
KEEPER  
INITIATIVE**

Youth Perspective Report &  
Next Step Recommendations

**OCTOBER 14, 2015**





October 14, 2015

Dear Stakeholders:

As your mayor for what will soon be 16 years, I have been and will continue to be humbled and proud to represent the most giving community in the country. My administration has diligently worked to support and contribute to the great work taking place in our community to increase opportunities for our most vulnerable residents. We have also implemented several initiatives that focus on the needs of residents living in poverty, including:

- African American Male Initiative (AAMI): to support the development of life and work skills for men and fathers through mentorship, and the provision of re-entry assistance for former offenders.
- Applications for Purpose, Pride, and Support (APPS) Program: to intervene and prevent youth violence.
- City Leaders & Capital Kids: to introduce students to careers in public service and provide after-school programming to support student learning.
- Restoration Academy: to assist former offenders in acquiring permanent, full-time employment.

As I stated in my 2014 State of the City address, despite the work of these programs and many others, the reality is that far too many Columbus residents still do not share in our city's success. This is particularly true for African American and other males of color. In order to change this trend, it is going to take a concerted and more coordinated effort from each of us.



Mayor Michael B. Coleman

This is why I gladly accepted President Barack Obama's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) challenge by agreeing to listen to and work with the community to implement a plan that leverages existing resources to reduce the opportunity gaps experienced by boys and men of color. Doing so presents a unique opportunity to address the causes of these negative social trends and with greater access to lessons learned from communities across the nation engaged in this work.

Based on wide-ranging community input, the city's MBK efforts are initially focused on African American male youth and will eventually grow to encompass other marginalized groups as success is realized. It is also worth noting that the MBK work and its resulting benefits are by no means exclusive to African American male youth, and they will be accessible to others who are vulnerable.

Because the African American male youth voice is crucial to the development and implementation of an action plan that will better support their success, City Council Member Shannon Hardin and I formed the My Brother's Keeper Task Force to gather their perspectives. It is my hope that the viewpoints captured in this report and next step recommendations will be used by future Columbus mayors as a blueprint to create a more inclusive community where every resident is able to access the many resources and opportunities available in our wonderful city.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M.B. Coleman". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Michael B. Coleman

Mayor





October 14, 2015

Dear Community:

Based on salient stakeholder feedback gathered from the first My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Community Forum in December 2014, the City of Columbus decided to initially focus its MBK efforts on African American male youth. To this end, Mayor Coleman and I formed the My Brother's Keeper Task Force to explore how the city could better promote the successes of this vulnerable group. The task force began by examining two domains that are known to be uphill battles for African American male youth: (a) workforce development and access; and (b) community violence and safety. After the task force synthesized information on these topics, it became evident that our MBK work should be divided into two parts: (a) identifying the specific challenges that the city's MBK efforts will address; and (b) pinpointing how the city will move the needle on the specific challenges we identify.

For guidance on part one of the work, the task force engaged African American male youth directly to determine how they viewed success and the supports they needed to achieve it. What we learned was invaluable. We learned that the task force's initial efforts would have been better spent by first engaging the youth to gather their perspectives, followed by seeking out the experts to learn more about how the city might be able to address the three main obstacles they raised as barriers to living a happy, healthy, and productive life: education; relationships and community; and personal development, health, and self-governance.



Councilmember Shannon G. Hardin

This report reflects part one of our work by providing the task force's guidance on where the city should narrow its focus. This document also provides initial direction for part two, or how we can move the needle by:

- (a) convening key stakeholders to identify and implement changes that may leverage existing individual and collective efforts;
- (b) setting shared community goals and common benchmarks of success;
- (c) facilitating agreement amongst organizations to collectively work toward the attainment of these goals and benchmarks;
- (d) monitoring progress;
- (e) making necessary adjustments to advance the work; and
- (f) continuing to work together until success is realized.

I hope that you will join me in continuing to make Columbus the best city to live, work, and raise a family for every resident, and I thank you for all that you do for our community.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shannon G. Hardin'. The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'S' and a trailing flourish.

Shannon G. Hardin

City Council Member



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Page

7	Introduction
8	My Brother's Keeper Task Force
9	City of Columbus My Brother's Keeper Initiative
10	The African American Male Youth Perspective
11	Youth Summit Format
11	Themes, Descriptions, and Next Step Recommendations
12	Question #1: What does living a happy, healthy, and productive life look like?
13	Question #1 Response Themes
16	Question #2: What is the main obstacle to living a happy, healthy, and productive life?
17	Question #2 Response Themes
18	Question #3: What supports, people, opportunities, resources, and tasks do you need to live a happy, healthy, and productive life?
19	Question #3 Response Themes
23	Next Step Recommendations
27	Closing
29	Acknowledgements

## RECOMMENDED CITATION FOR THIS REPORT:

My Brother's Keeper Initiative Task Force (2015).

City of Columbus My Brother's Keeper Initiative: Youth Perspective Report & Next Step Recommendations. Columbus, OH: City of Columbus.

The report is also available in PDF format for free, public download at [www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015](http://www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015).

## DISCLAIMER:

Opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent a specific viewpoint of the City of Columbus and/or an individual perspective from one specific person or group. Instead, this report is a synthesis of multiple conversations and discussions with African American male youth and other stakeholders, as well as a close examination of current data trends.





...cradle  
to college  
and career  
strategies...



# INTRODUCTION

Throughout the nation, too many males of color experience persistent societal challenges that inhibit their access to most, if not all, of the vast resources our country affords to its citizenry. Worse yet, the state of males of color has diminished in many social and economic categories – as evidenced by high unemployment rates, high incarceration rates, high poverty rates, and low educational attainment rates – despite decades of diligent efforts to improve these outcomes.

*At alarming rates, males of color underachieve at every juncture of their schooling (e.g., elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels). Worse yet, these educational trends remain even when you control for geographical location, socioeconomic status, and other demographic variables.*

Dr. James L. Moore, III, EHE Distinguished Professor of Urban Education and Executive Director of the Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male, The Ohio State University.

Popular and social science literature suggest the only way to curb these alarming trends is for organizations to collectively set and work toward the attainment of common community goals and outcomes. Known as collective impact, this change model is one in which organizations from the private, public, philanthropic, community, nonprofit, faith-based, and education sectors align around a vision and engage in activities to tackle complex social challenges. This collaborative approach, through efficacious programs and shared interventions, possesses remarkable promise in expanding opportunities and improving life outcomes for vulnerable populations.

In this fashion, President Barack Obama launched My Brother's Keeper (MBK) on February 27, 2014 to expand opportunities for boys and men of color. On September 26, 2014, the President issued a national challenge to cities, townships, tribes and counties to create and implement “cradle-to-college-and-career strateg(ies)” to address at least two of the six following challenges to ensure that all:

- (a) children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally ready;
- (b) children read at grade level by the third grade;
- (c) youth graduate from high school;
- (d) youth complete post-secondary education or training;
- (e) youth out of school are employed; and
- (f) youth remain safe from violent crime.

*That's what 'My Brother's Keeper' is all about. Helping more of our young people stay on track. Providing the support they need to think more broadly about their future. Building on what works—when it works, in those critical life-changing moments.*

President Barack Obama, February, 2014.  
[www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper](http://www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper).

# MY BROTHER'S KEEPER TASK FORCE MEMBERS

**REBECCA ASMO**

Executive Director, Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus  
(After School and Summer School Program Representative)

**RICHARD BASH**

Deputy Director, Columbus City Police Department  
(Law Enforcement Representative)

**JOHN T. BOSTON III**

Senior Pastor, Central Seventh Day Adventist Church  
(Faith-Based Representative)

**LASHAUN CARTER**

Project Director, *FutureReady* Columbus  
(Workforce Representative)

**RODNEY GROVES & MALIK THOMPSON**

Students, Centennial and Eastmoor Academy High Schools, Columbus City Schools (K-12 Student Representatives)

**DORSEY HAGER**

Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Columbus/Central Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council (Labor Representative)

**DR. KEISHA HUNLEY-JENKINS (CO-CHAIR)**

External Affairs Director, Mayor Michael B. Coleman's Office  
(Mayor's Office Representative)

**JASON JOHNSON**

Principal, Northland High School, Columbus City Schools  
(School District Representative)

**TIMOTHY JONES**

Student, The Ohio State University  
(Higher Education Student Representative)

**COREY LEFTRIDGE**

APPS Director, Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks  
(Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Representative)

**DR. MARK LOMAX**

R.I.S.E Club Director, Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus  
(After School and Summer School Program Representative)

**DR. JAMES L. MOORE III (CO-CHAIR)**

EHE Distinguished Professor of Urban Education and Executive Director, Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male, The Ohio State University  
(Higher Education Representative)

**ROCKY PARKER**

Vice President of Talent Acquisition and Human Resources, Nationwide  
(Private Sector Representative)

**CARLA WILLIAMS SCOTT**

Assistant Director, Franklin County Economic Development & Planning  
(Basic Needs Representative)



# CITY OF COLUMBUS

## MY BROTHER'S KEEPER INITIATIVE

Michael B. Coleman, Mayor of the City of Columbus, accepted President Obama's MBK Call to Action to create and implement a plan to improve opportunities for boys and men of color on September 27, 2014. The city hosted its first MBK Community Forum at the King Arts Complex on December 1, 2014 to gather community input to help identify the challenges the city's MBK efforts would address.

The consensus of the feedback, gathered from the nearly 400 stakeholders who attended the forum, was that our community needed a collective effort to focus on the success of African American male youth. Accordingly, Mayor Coleman and City Council Member Shannon Hardin jointly formed the My Brother's Keeper Task Force (MBKTF) on May 13, 2015 to develop recommendations for the incoming administration about how to best position itself to foster greater opportunities and success amongst this group.

In this report, success was defined as achieving a level of financial stability that enables a person to satisfy basic needs, such as food, clothing, and

shelter, so that they have a foundation to pursue individual aspirations and provide for a family, if he or she chooses.

The MBKTF began its work by learning more about two factors: (a) workforce development and access and (b) community violence and safety. After critical discussions about these and many other related issues, it was clear that pinpointing the scope of work for the city's MBK efforts would be daunting without additional information. As such, the MBKTF convened four youth summits to gather the African American male youth perspective on what they wanted out of life and the supports they needed to achieve. Based on what was learned from these summits and other sources, the MBKTF developed the next step recommendations presented later in this report. It is the MBKTF's hope that the incoming administration will adopt these recommendations and facilitate the collaborative relationships necessary to address the persistent opportunity gaps experienced by African American male youth and other vulnerable populations in our city.





## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

The city partnered with the Columbus City School District, Franklin County Jobs & Family Services, and several other community organizations to host four summer youth summits. The purpose was to gather the youth perspective necessary to inform the next step recommendations presented in this report. Below are the dates and locations of the four summits that were convened across the city:

- 1. Linden McKinley STEM 7-12 High School (north) on Saturday, June 6, 2015**
- 2. West High School (west) on Saturday, June 20, 2015**
- 3. South High School (south) on Friday, July 10, 2015**
- 4. Walnut Ridge High School (east) on Saturday, July 25, 2015**

All of the summits were aligned with four of the city's CAP City Night Festivals, a component of the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department's Applications for Purpose, Pride, and Success (APPS) program.

### Applications for Purpose, Pride and Success

Created in 2011 by Mayor Michael B. Coleman, the mission of the APPS program is to enrich the lives of Columbus youth and young adults, ages 14-21, by connecting individuals and their families to programs and services focused on building life skills, character development, employment, post-secondary education, and other components that foster success. This initiative is a violence prevention and intervention program aimed at reducing the incidence of gang-involved shootings and youth homicides in four Columbus neighborhoods where these incidents have historically occurred.

More than 100 African American male adults captured youth perspectives at the summits by volunteering their time to attend a training session and facilitate at least one 90-minute small group youth discussion. Over 500 African American male youth between the ages of 10-24, participated in the four summits.



# YOUTH SUMMIT FORMAT

At the youth summits, the participants were grouped into four categories: (a) ages 10-12; (b) ages 13-15; (c) ages 16-18; and (d) ages 19-24. These were further divided into groups of no more than 10, where a volunteer facilitator led them through 90 minutes of discussion to collect their answers to the following questions:

- 1. What does living a happy, healthy, and productive life look like?**
- 2. What is a major obstacle to living a happy, healthy, and productive life?**
- 3. What supports, people, opportunities, resources, and tasks do you need to live a happy healthy, and productive life?**

Each facilitator captured his group's responses to the aforementioned questions on a flipchart and the notes from the summit sessions were transcribed. All of the themes, descriptions, and recommendations from this report emerged from the analysis of the transcribed notes and information collected from other sources.

Because family involvement is vital to the development of youth, 90-minute adult sessions for individuals 25 and over were conducted at each summit. Nearly 400 adults participated in these sessions where they interacted with one another and the facilitators to learn how to better understand, connect, and communicate with youth, and further support their development.



## THEMES, DESCRIPTIONS, AND NEXT STEP RECOMMENDATIONS

Because the MBKTF realized that additional interaction with the community and service providers was critical to fully leverage the existing resources in Columbus, the next step recommendations in this report were intended to serve as a roadmap for the incoming administration about where and how it should focus its efforts to better support the success of African American males and others.

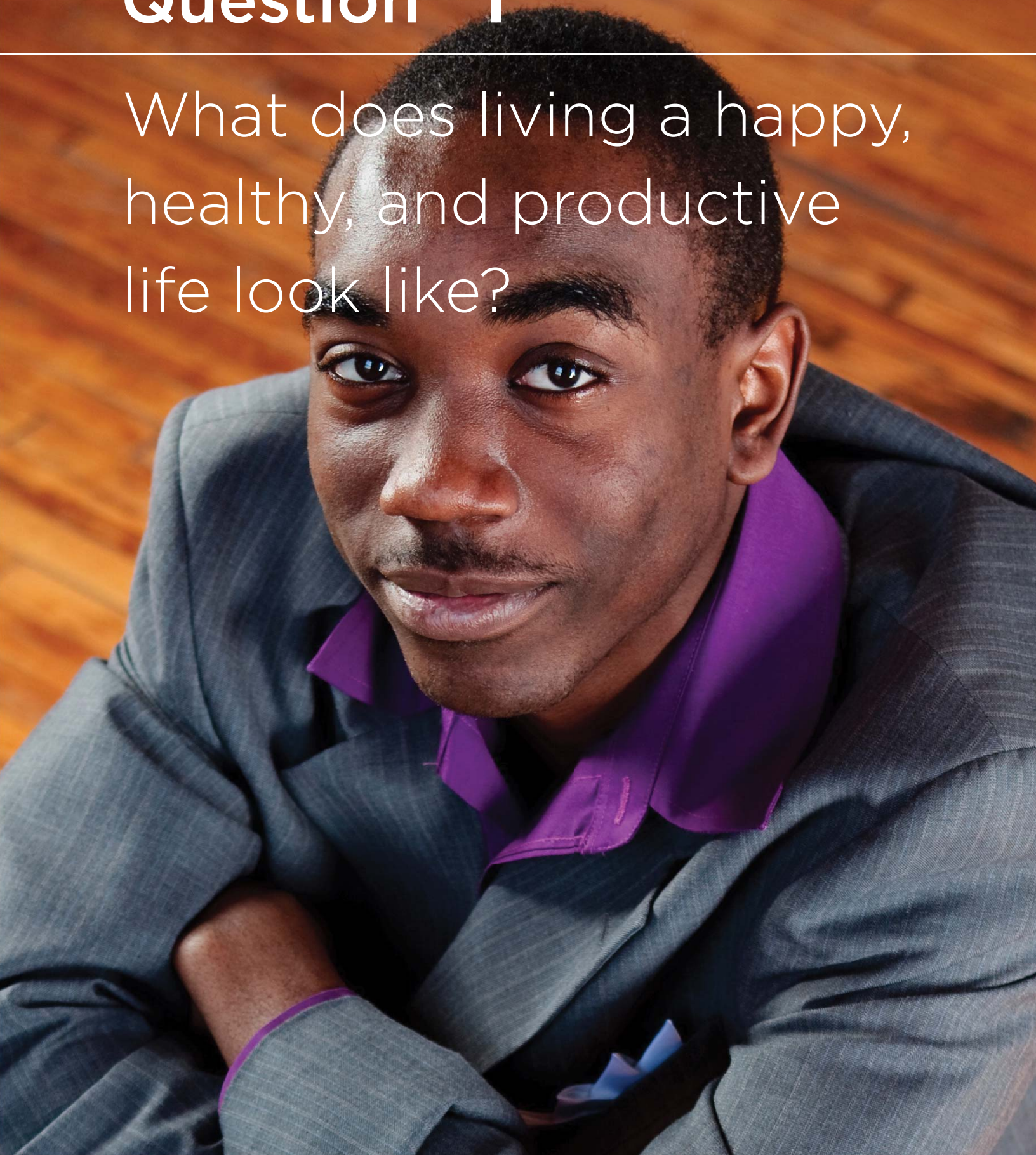
*A special thank you to Javier Sanchez, Founder & CEO of R.E.A.C.H. Communications, Inc. Mr. Sanchez's engagement made it possible for The City of Columbus to gather the youth voices and the subsequent next step recommendations presented in this report.*



# #1 Question

---

What does living a happy, healthy, and productive life look like?





# QUESTION #1 RESPONSE THEMES

(All responses listed in alphabetical order.)

**1. Choice, Opportunity, and Freedom:** The group reported that choice, opportunity, and the freedom to live their lives, based on their own goals and dreams, were necessary to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below describes how they conceived choice, opportunity, and freedom.

## Youth Described Choice, Opportunity, and Freedom as:

Being ready to seize and take advantage of opportunities

Doing the things you love

Freedom to choose one's lifestyle

Knowing your passion and purpose and living it

Making own decisions

Meeting/engaging new people

**2. Community Desires and Needs:** The group reported that safe communities were essential to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below illustrates how they comprehended their community desires and needs.

## Youth Described Community Desires and Needs as:

Drug free and clean

Having a strong sense of community

People caring about each other

People having fun together

Respectful and supportive

Safe and new parks

**3. Education:** The group reported that living a happy, healthy, and productive life requires education. The table below captures this notion.

## Youth Described Education as "Having Access To":

After school programs

Caring and invested teachers, principals, and counselors

College fairs

Getting good grades

Graduating from high school and college

Scholarships

Tutors

**4. Financial Stability:** The group reported that financial stability was necessary to living a happy, healthy and productive life. The table below depicts how they described financial stability.

## Youth Described Financial Stability as:

Achieving the "American Dream"

Being able to meet basic needs

Being debt free

Career/being a successful entrepreneur

Having a good job

Having enough money to be comfortable

**5. Good Physical Health:** The group reported that good physical health was critical to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below describes how they conceptualized good physical health.

Youth Described Physical Health as:
Access to health care and regular doctor visits
Access to healthy food and balanced meals
Developing healthy habits
Living a full and long life
Playing sports and being active

**6. Healthy Relationships with Others:** The group reported that healthy relationships with others were a key component of living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below illustrates how they depicted healthy relationships with others.

Youth Described Healthy Relationships with Others as:		
BEING:	HAVING:	Everyone loves and cares about you
A good communicator	A good family	Performing community service
Around happy people	Counselors	Raising happy families
Around successful people	Girlfriends and wives	Spending time with family
Around supportive people	Good father figures	
	Good, happy friends	
	Good parents	
	Mentors	
	Role models	
	Support	



**7. Positive Self-Image, Outlook, Behavior, and Maintaining Strong Mental Health:** The group reported that positive self-image, outlook, behavior, and maintaining strong mental health were vital components of living a happy, healthy, and productive life. They specifically defined this category in the table below.

Youth Described a Positive Self-Image, Outlook, Behavior, and Maintaining Strong Mental Health as:	
BEING:	Expressing yourself in a positive manner
A leader	Having fun and enjoying life
A motivator	Learning from mistakes
Balanced	Listening to others
Caring	Living a good life
Disciplined	Looking good
Emotionally aware and in tune with others	Managing stress
Focused	Managing time wisely
Happy	Not taking things too seriously
Hard-working	Seeking opportunities
In a cycle of continuous improvement	Spiritual/religious connections
Independent	Staying out of trouble
Organized	Taking advantage of opportunities
Persistent	
Positive	
Responsible	
Supportive of others	
True to yourself	

# #2

## Question

---

What is the main obstacle to living a happy, healthy, and productive life?





## QUESTION #2 RESPONSE THEMES

(All responses listed in alphabetical order.)

Answers to this question provide strong insights and inferences about how the city should focus its MBK efforts to better support the success African American male youth and others.

Three barriers were pinpointed that must be overcome to live happy, healthy and productive lives: (a) Education; (b) Relationships and Community; and (c) Personal Development, Health, and Self-Governance.

**1. Education:** The group reported that Education was one of the main barriers to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below demonstrates how they described education, or the lack of educational attainment, as a barrier.

### Youth Described Education as a Number One Obstacle to Living a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life in the Following Ways:

Education is not relevant to real life

Lack of credentials

Not getting good grades

Unaware of/lack of access to education and education support opportunities and resources

**2. Personal Development, Health, and Self-Governance:** The group reported that the theme of Personal Development, Health, and Self-Governance was one of the main barriers to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below illustrates how they described Personal Development, Health, and Self-Governance as an obstacle.

### Youth Described Personal Development, Health, and Self-Governance as a Number One Obstacle to Living a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life in the Following Ways “as Lacking”:

Drug abuse resistance

Father figures

Finances

Freedom

Goal setting

Knowledge of/access to exposure

Leadership training

Mentorship

Motivation

Opportunity

Physical/mental health

Positive role models

Resistance to peer pressure

Stress management

**3. Relationships and Community:** The group reported that the theme of Relationships and Community was one of the main barriers to living a happy, healthy, and productive life. The table below illustrates how they conceptualized relationships and community as an obstacle.

### Youth Described Relationships and Community as a Number One Obstacle to Living a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life in the Following Ways:

Fighting, violence, and bullying

Mutual lack of trust between youth and police

Negative community influences

Racism and racial profiling



# #3

## Question

---

What supports, people, opportunities, resources, and tasks do you need to live a happy, healthy, and productive life?



## QUESTION #3 RESPONSE THEMES

(All responses listed in alphabetical order.)

**1. Supports:** The supports that the group reported they needed to live a happy, healthy, and productive life are stated in the table below.

### Youth Reported That the Supports They Need to Live a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life Include:

Choice and opportunity

Community service

Education

Exposure/access to more community/positive programs and activities

Financial stability (jobs & money)

Positive relationships (with family, fathers, friends, girlfriends, mentors, opportunities to network, role models, and wives)

Satisfaction of basic needs

Spirituality

**2. People:** The people that the group reported they needed access to in order to live a happy, healthy, and productive life are illustrated in the table below.

### Youth Reported That the People They Need to Live a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life Include:

Business leaders

Community leaders/members

Counselors

Employers

Entrepreneurs

Family

Fathers

Financially successful people

Friends

Gang leaders

God and spiritual/religious leaders

Government officials

Job seekers

Leaders

Mentors

Other youth/youth leadership opportunities

Parents

Principals

Police officers

Role models

Successful people

Superintendents

Supportive people

Teachers

Victims

**3. Opportunities:** The opportunities that the group reported they needed in order to live a happy, healthy, and productive life are presented in the table below.

**Youth reported that the Opportunities They Need to Live a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life Include "Having Access to":**

Affordable and quality education
After-school/summer school programs
Apprenticeships
Banks
Career and job fairs
Career day
Choice/opportunity/freedom
Church
College fairs
College and school tours
Employment
Financial opportunities
Goal setting practices
Having vision
Internships
Knowledge of/access to resources for basic needs
Leadership training
Libraries
Mental/physical health
Mentorship opportunities
Opportunities to voice community concerns
Positive family
Positive father engagement
Professional development
Programs/interventions
Social media
Sports trainers/camps/opportunities
Study abroad
Transportation

**4. Resources:** The resources that the group reported they needed in order to live a happy, healthy, and productive life are listed in the table below.

**Youth reported that the Resources They Need to Live a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life Include:**

Access to information
Apprenticeships
Choice/opportunity/freedom
Community
Community centers and facilities
Counseling
Education
Employment
Exposure
Family
Financial education
Financial stability
Fun/positive outlook and living
Identification documents (ex. State ID)
Internships
Life insurance
Mentors
Networking
Programs/interventions resources to meet basic needs
Sports
Training
Transportation



**5. Tasks:** The tasks that the group reported they needed to complete in order to live a happy, healthy, and productive life are captured in the table below.

Youth Reported That the Tasks They Need to Live a Happy, Healthy, and Productive Life Include:	
BEING:	Apprenticeships
Active	Career exploration
Exposed	Community service
Goal oriented	Counseling
Spiritually connected	Graduate
Strategic	Having a positive, healthy outlook, and lifestyle
	Having positive relationships with others
	Having role models
	Leadership opportunities
	Leadership training
	Making connections
	Mentors
	Networking
	Playing sports
	Satisfying basic needs
	Securing a good job/career
	Support
	Training

In this report, success was defined as achieving a level of financial stability that enables a person to satisfy basic needs- such as food, clothing, and shelter- so that they have a foundation to pursue individual aspirations and provide for a family, if he or she chooses.

#### TO FURTHER ITS MBK EFFORTS, THEY CITY SHOULD:

- Review the number one obstacles listed by the youth and use available data to select at least one challenge to address first.
- Once the specific challenge is selected, the city should convene working groups of stakeholders working in that space to collectively:
  - Identify gaps in services and/or service delivery.
  - Develop and implement a strategy to better coordinate and leverage existing resources to address the identified gaps.
  - Monitor the results of the implementation and make adjustments as necessary to continuously improve the community's ability to support the success of African American male youth and others.
- Use data to report out on progress and next steps.
- Begin to focus on other groups by customizing the models of success that are realized through this work.







# NEXT STEP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Columbus community has a reputation for being the best place to work, live, and raise a family. The engagement of a broad range of stakeholders in the MBK activities over the last 10 months is further evidence of our community's dedication to supporting the success of African American male youth and others. With the goal of creating a network of services, the five recommendations that follow seek to build on the momentum and success of existing programs to amplify their impact.

## THE CITY SHOULD:

### **1. Appoint a key person in the Mayor's Office to lead and oversee the city's My Brother's Keeper efforts.**

There has been great momentum built with the city's MBK efforts to date. The community is eager to amplify its positive impact on the lives of African American male youth and others. To that end, it is imperative that the next administration appoint a visible representative in the Mayor's Office to stay abreast of, oversee, and lead the city's MBK efforts by leveraging and complementing the great work already taking place in our community.

### **2. Promote the need to enhance the capacity of HandsOn Central Ohio, Columbus' 2-1-1 centralized information and referral system, so that it can serve as the city's one-stop shop that connects residents with the existing programs and services they need, when they need them.**

Columbus is a giving community with numerous resources to serve those in need. However, one of the most common issues raised amongst residents and service provider staff is that they are unaware of all the programs and services available in our community. Maintaining a common and current directory of available programs and services would aid residents and service providers in identifying and connecting individuals with the resources they require to not only survive, but to thrive.

HandsOn Central Ohio, formerly Firstlink, serves as our community's one-stop connector to programs and services. However, in order for the organization to truly operate as the linchpin that connects everyone in our community with the right services at the right time, **a community campaign ensuring the following components is required:**

- Every service provider in Central Ohio is registered with, and maintains updated information in the HandsOn Central Ohio directory.
- All service provider staff and public employees that interface with the community are trained on HandsOn Central Ohio's information and referral directories, know how to use them as tools to accomplish their work, and understand its positive effect on client outcomes.
- The greater community is aware of HandsOn Central Ohio, understands its role as the city's 2-1-1 centralized information and referral provider, and knows how to access and use its resource directories.
- HandsOn Central Ohio has the capacity to serve the volume of inquiries it receives consistently and in a timely fashion.

**3. Convene service providers working in the following space(s) to identify and implement ways they can better work together to support the success of African American male youth and others: (a) education; (b) personal development, health, and self-governance; and/or (c) relationships and community.**

The African American male youth reported that the main obstacles they face in living happy, healthy, productive lives are: (a) education; (b) personal development, health, and self-governance; and (c) relationships and community. The city should form a working group for at least one of these three main obstacles. The goal of the working group, and related community conversations, will be to create and implement action plans that better coordinate existing programs so that they have an even greater impact in supporting the success of African American male youth and others.

Below are recommendations (*listed in alphabetical order*) for how the city could begin addressing each of the three main obstacles to living a happy, healthy, and productive life, as identified by the youth.

## **EDUCATION**

---

### **THE CITY SHOULD:**

- Remain closely engaged with the work of *FutureReady Columbus*. *FutureReady Columbus* will work with entities that provide early childhood education and serve Columbus students to ensure that they receive a quality educational experience that prepares them for successful adulthood.
- Work with the community to increase awareness of and access to quality tutoring, after-school and summer school programming, and wrap around services for students as necessary, and facilitate the continuous improvement of these programs and services.
- Work with the education, employment, and labor sectors to increase awareness of and access to careers and career paths.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, AND SELF-GOVERNANCE**

---

### **THE CITY SHOULD WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY TO:**

- Convene agencies that provide counseling, leadership, and mentoring services to develop a strategy to ensure that all students needing guidance receive the right support at the right time.
- Convene agencies working with former offenders to develop strategies to ensure they have real opportunities to lead happy, healthy, and productive lives in our community.
- Increase awareness of and access to resources that meet the basic needs of youth and their families.
- Provide year-round job and career exposure, shadowing, and experiences for youth.

## **RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNITY**

---

### **THE CITY SHOULD WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY TO:**

- Build on the APPS program to map hotspots of violence and work with community members to pro-actively connect and engage youth and their families with resources as necessary.
- Continue strengthening its work in making and promoting the City of Columbus as a welcoming city that is smart, open, diverse and the best place to live, work, and raise a family for every resident.
- Develop and provide positive relationships between youth and police.
- Develop and implement an anti-violence campaign that would promote non-violent conflict resolution as well as increase awareness and access to resources aimed at violence reduction.

#### **4. Proactively include the youth voice in policy and decision-making, as well as program and event development and implementation.**

Youth reported that they seek engagement and leadership opportunities. The city should:

*(Listed in alphabetical order)*

- Continue to host regular youth summits, town halls, and go to where youth are to hear from them directly about the challenges they face and the community supports they need to be successful. This information should be documented and incorporated in city and community policy and decision-making whenever appropriate.
- Create youth seats on boards, commissions, and workgroups as appropriate.
- Increase awareness of and access to city and community service activities.
- Provide positive opportunities for youth to interact with law enforcement.

#### **5. Use data to establish short and long-term goals to measure the success of African American male youth.**

The city should use accessible data to establish a baseline of how African American male youth fare on selected economic and social indicators and set shared goals and common benchmarks of where the community would like to see these numbers in five years. Sharing these common goals could enable community partners to align their efforts, strengthen program quality, and increase the number of youth they serve effectively.





## CLOSING

This report represents part one of the city's MBK work that outlines where the city should focus its efforts. It also provides guidance for part two of the MBK work, or the process the city should use to move the needle for the specific challenges it will address to better support the success of African American male youth and others. It is important to note that this document and its contents are a starting point for this critical work and that your help is key to achieving the results that our youth deserve.

**For updates about the city's MBK initiative, please visit [www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015](http://www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015). Also be sure to register on the site so that you will receive MBK email updates.**

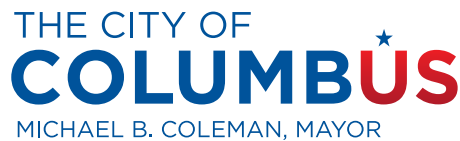









# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Academy for Urban Scholars  
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.,  
Alpha Rho Lambda Chapter  
Columbus Alumnae Chapter of  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
Columbus Urban League  
COWIC  
Easton Community Foundation  
The Expanding Visions Foundation  
Franklin County  
*FutureReady* Columbus  
HandsOn Central Ohio  
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.,  
Columbus Alumni Chapter  
King Arts Complex  
Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race  
& Ethnicity  
Local Matters  
Logos Bible Church  
Metro PCS  
Mu Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi  
Fraternity, Inc.  
The National African American Male  
Wellness Walk Initiative  
National Center for Urban Solutions  
Nationwide Insurance  
The Ohio State University  
106.7 The Beat  
Paramount Advantage  
Radio One Power 107.5  
SAVE Concerts  
Tim Horton's  
United Way of Central Ohio



# I AM MBK

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
MICHAEL B. COLEMAN, MAYOR

[www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015](http://www.Columbus.gov/MBK2015)